

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, July 31, 2017, to discuss the Forest Preserve Health Assessment.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan

ABSENT WERE: Ms. Leta M. Mach was on travel.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Nicole Ard, City Manager, Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Administrative Assistant, Ms. Erin Josephitis and Bonita Anderson, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Osband of A. Morton Thomas & Association, Inc. (AMT), Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB), Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT).

Mayor Jordan asked Council members or staff if they had any additional comments to add to the agenda. Ms. Ard and Council noted reports would be made.

Mayor Jordan gave an overview and background information on the preparation of the Forest Health Assessment for the North and South Forest Preservation. The purpose of the study was to provide information on the current health of the forest and to provide baseline measurements for future assessments and to prepare recommended changes and updates to the Management and Maintenance Guidelines.

Consultant Presentation

Mr. Greg Osband, AMT gave a Powerpoint presentation on the Forest Health Assessment. He discussed the baseline data to understand the existing forest conditions and the future conditions.

Mayor Jordan asked Mr. Osband what was his methodology and his approach with the assessment report. Mr. Osband gave an overview of the process and discussed the Data & Photographs of Vol. I & Vol. II, Stewardship of the natural resource, existing conditions, high erosion (road beds), mulch dump, low lands and habitat improvements.

Council would like to have further discussion at a future work session meeting. The Mayor invited the Forest Preserve Advisory Board & other Board members to give an overview on the timeline of events with the Forest Preserve Health Assessment.

There was a summary read into the record by a member of the Forest Preserve Advisory Board. The comments were insightful and the Board would like to see more details to the plan.

Board members had some concerns about the utility of the results. Data source is very long and they don't know if it was mapped properly. FPAB requested footnotes in the study. Trails were based on data picked up and they did some ground siting. Members found the study hard to follow. A table of contents is needed and the Appendices need to be better organized.

Ms. Davis is seeking a variety of variations on the report & guidelines.

Mr. Putens discussed the cycle of events as far as decision making, which will come from the citizens, the advisory board and the council.

Mr. Roberts stated that the forest needs to be protected and not put too much into studies to protect the forest. He wants to see it as a place for kids and environmentalists to explore.

Mr. Herling, who has been a resident since 1987, recalls obtaining 1700 signatures to preserve and protect the Forest.

The Advisory Board has some concerns about the preservation of the Forest.

Council will allow the Advisory Board to handle the review recommendation of the Forest Preserve Study.

Erin Josephitis gave a summary and overview of the study and suggested finding a solution for the GPS coordinates. She had some concerns about the water quality and wanted to know if AMT could provide the information for the baseline data.

Citizen comments – Susan Barnett has a better understanding of the health assessment thanks to the consultant.

Colin Byrd asked for clarification on the listing of the Boards, water quality, and the stick huts.

Mr. Putens left at 9:57 pm

Information Items

Mr. Herling attended the Green ACES meeting and he suggested changing the setup of the meeting room when presentations are given to the Council. He also attended the International Society of Arborists at the National Harbor.

Ms. Davis noticed that public works has placed old textile bins by the recycling areas. There was an article about Capital Office Park about food trucks and an outdoor pavilion. Ms. Davis noted that COP was supposed to ask Council for permission to install a pavilion. Ms. Davis attended the Chesapeake Bay & Water Resource Policy Committee at COG. The topic was climate change.

Ms. Ard noted that the MML Legislation will be added to the Regular Meeting's agenda for reconsideration.

Mayor Jordan adjourned the meeting at 10:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bonita Anderson
City Clerk*